2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

Other evil spirits are *Bakru, Yorkas* (a Carib word), *Aze-man,* and *Lybba.* The Bakru are very ugly. A Negro picked up a crying child and sat him on his shoulders. His companion noticed the child's eyes and said: "That is a Bakru." The Negro dashed the child down. The child was instantly transformed into an ape and said: "I missed you that time, but next time I'll get you." The Bakru may also take the form of little mannikins with large heads.

Yorkas are ghosts. They are very similar to our conception of haunting spooks. They may be the ghosts of dead people, more especially of dead enemies who have returned to do harm.

The Azeman are the most awful of all spirits. They leave their skins every night and travel about in the form of persons without any skin. Consequently they are an ugly, bleeding sight. At dawn they assume their covering. But if the skin is found and salt placed around it, it shrinks so that it becomes too small for the Azeman to get back into. This causes them to vanish. Another method of getting rid of the Azeman is to scatter rice about. They dislike rice very much and stop to pick the grains up out of the way. In their preoccupation they do not notice the coming of dawn, which is very harmful to them.

The Lybba are spirits or ghosts similar to the Yorka.

A sleeping Bush Negro must be waked with care, as his personal spirit, the soul, or kra, may not be able to get back in time if he is too suddenly aroused.

The Djukas may be possessed by almost any spirit. During

354 /9 cont./
[372] they do not like to be without it; at least they do not like to
[353] sleep without a fire. Their weapons hang above their sleeping
[513] place, which is a hammock, in which man and wife sometimes lie
342 together. Rarely do more than one man and one woman with their small children live in a single hut.

296 Their articles of clothing, as well as other small belongings,
251 are kept in pagalen, a kind of plaited basketwork, while they keep
415 water, strong drinks, sugar juice, rice, salt, and so forth in
824 calabashes and godos (2).

2. Both hollowed-out fruit rinds of the Crescentia cagete L. and the Cucurbita lagenaria L., plants from the family of the Cucurbitaceae.

415 Some of them have cedarwood clothes-chests, which must be specially mounted with a great deal of copper; one also sometimes finds liqueur cellars with gilded bottles.

353 For the rest everything is left out in the open in the hut.

264 Often many men come together in one hut for their meals and eat out of one large bowl or calabash. The women withdraw after having placed on very low tables several calabashes or bowls of food for their husbands in the circle in which they are seated, never forgetting to add a large calabash with clean water for washing the hands before and after the meal. The women gather in another hut in order to consume what they kept out for themselves beforehand and what has been left by their husbands.

[888] If an aged person or a highly placed person is in their midst,
[554] he is offered the calabash of food first, so that he may take from it what he wants and eat it by himself from an ordinary plate, although seated in the circle, /10/ while the others partake of their meal from the large bowl. In general they talk with one another during the meal, the highly placed person also taking part in the conversation.

/14 cont./

584 and, once this has been promised, she does indeed continue to be regarded specifically as the betrothed of the person who made the request. As soon as she is marriageable, she is handed over to her man with or without her consent, and it may be regarded as a rare case when such a promise is broken.

[431] The man to whom she is promised sometimes does not see his future wife before the occasion of her betrothal, but usually he is concerned with her upbringing and from time to time gives her presents consisting of money, pantjes, and corals.

[591] Some take the girl promised to them even when she is only three or four years old in order to rear her further.

[672] The promising of newborn girls takes place for the most part [682] when there are obligations between parents, as was reported in Chapter III, and in the case of enslavement which is done to one [567] family by another in case of poisoning, and so forth.

586 It is an everyday occurrence that a woman leaves her husband or a man his wife for another.

595 Polygyny is much practiced, and among my workers I know several who have three or four wives, most of whom are very young. Some, however, have only one wife.

It is noteworthy that all the wives sleep with the man in one hut, while in addition he perhaps keeps with him a girl whom he [513] is bringing up to be his wife. One wife will be /15/ with him in the hammock and lies with her feet at the head end of the man and the latter in turn with his feet at the head end of the women, while the other women sleep in their hammocks.

[484] If a Bush Negro goes out, be it to celebrate a festival or in order to float wood to the town, he takes all his wives with him; only in case of illness do they remain behind.

His wives get money separately, and therefore they must also separately provide for his food, so that one cooks the food in the morning, another at midday, a third in the evening, etc. [578] This way of life and their jealous nature frequently bring about household quarrels that rarely end in any way other than bloody fights.

585 Upon the conclusion of a marriage the man is obligated to 583 give the parents of the girl as a marriage portion a long, broad,

/I cont./

132 The climate is relatively temperate and easy for the European
[513] to stand. In the forest the thermometer does not rise to more than 28° during the hot hours, to go back down to 21° at the end of the night: everyone sleeps with a blanket, Refugee Blacks and Creoles as well as Europeans. Humidity is very great during nearly all the year; precipitation averages three meters a year or about 50 centimeters less than at Cayenne. The year is divided into two seasons: "summer" from July to December, and the rainy season the rest of the year, with a maximum of precipitation in
133 May and June. The water level varies considerably in the course
182 of the year (several meters). The populations of the interior,
[361] spaced out along the rivers, suit the rhythm of their lives to the
[164] height of the water; the water rules transportation, fishing, and crops; moreover, a certain number of illnesses are in close relation to the rains, in particular those which have an insect for vector.

241 Almost everywhere the soil is very poor in organic matter
[134] and fundamental ingredients, very waterlogged necessitating the practice of an itinerant agriculture on burned-over areas; the period of fallow ground varies from two to ten years, the optimum seeming to be about six. The inhabitants of Guiana cannot allow ground
[136] to lie fallow regularly because of the ravages of the manioc ant, /8/ which is active especially in habitually cultivated zones.
[134] Vain and costly efforts made by Europeans notably at Saint-Jean du Maroni about 1950, have shown that the fertility of lands not
[242] burned over is practically nil. The Indians and the Refugee Blacks consider that the fertility of the soil depends exclusively on the weight of cinders laid down during the burning.

When burned-over areas are cultivated, only one harvest is obtained; but this harvest is abundant, and the soil thus utilized can be regarded as relatively fertile. The knocking down and burning do not require great labor, so that primitive agricultural methods
241 can be considered to give a good yield. As a matter of fact, the
179 diverse populations of Guiana, Creoles and Refugee Blacks, have entirely adopted the methods of work resulting from the millennial

/132 cont./

868 [501] To this traditional knowledge, which remains indispensable, has been added for the past several years substantial knowledge of mechanics, because the use of outboard motors is becoming more and more common; this knowledge is transmitted in empirical fashion as it has been acquired. It must be recorded that the motors go and that they are well kept up.

86 The system of education employed by the Refugee Blacks is surely effective; their children are excessively turbulent and very difficult when they are in a group. When they are divided up individually in the midst of adults, they are placed under the best conditions for learning the techniques and traditions of their group.

429 The person charged with the education of a child does not willingly entrust him to another and takes him along whenever

• 513 he moves. However, by concern for propriety, the woman guardian sends the children she is raising to sleep in other houses on the days when her husband comes to visit her. Boys go to sleep at the home of a brother, an uncle, a comrade; the same for girls who have not yet reached puberty; but it is not the same for girls who have reached puberty; they are subjected to strict supervision.

648 871 156 This is one of the reasons why the Boni find it repugnant to put their children in school (French school of Maripasoula, Surinam school of Kotika). Without wishing to tackle here this sad problem to its fullest extent, we must state that this teaching, entirely inappropriate and dispensed by teachers who look down on the Refugee Blacks, has results nearly similar to those observed generally in Africa, the main one being to make the children strangers to their own families and misfits in their own country. There is practically no example of a case where the Boni nation has benefited from having one of its children go to school: if the child succeeds, he leaves for Paramaribo and never comes back again. If he fails, he then has much more

606 /152 cont./
Relations between husband and mother-in-law. As is commonly observed in Africa, the husband has the duty to respect his mother-in-law, to have a reserved attitude toward her. /153/ A curious custom exists on this subject among the Refugee Blacks: If he inadvertently arrives at the village wharf at the moment when she is bathing, he must pay her compensation in the form of a camisa. This is a reciprocal obligation.

[513] He may sleep under the same roof as she when the village is crowded, but not habitually.

606 607 On the other hand, the custom of the Refugee Blacks differs sharply from African customs on one important point: it does not call for any material obligation toward the mother-in-law or the wife's brothers. The husband is not at all required to give them presents or to contribute toward their maintenance. In fact, the wife gives her mother part of what her husband gives her.

684 Adultery. The custom of the Refugee Blacks concerning adultery is extremely curious. The outraged husband has the right to inflict a public punishment on the lover, which he must stand without defending himself. In the absence of the husband his brother is qualified to strike in his place. This punishment must take place in a village in the presence of witnesses capable of intervening if the punishment goes beyond accepted limits.

Only bare fists may be used.

A man can always escape too brutal a punishment by taking refuge in the water. His adversary may not follow him into it under pain of a severe punishment by the grand man. He can also take refuge in the bush.

[672] The husband's honor being thus publicly restored, the row is over; in such cases some men are seen to beat the wife, in addition, but this is not the general case; the true custom does not call for the wife to be beaten because she is considered irresponsible. She can either be repudiated or threatened